What is claimed is:

1. An alpha-amylase which is:
   a) a polypeptide produced by *Bacillus sp.* NCIMB 40916, or
   b) a polypeptide having an amino acid sequence as shown in positions 1-556 of SEQ ID NO: 4, or
   c) a polypeptide encoded by the alpha-amylase encoding part of the DNA sequence cloned into a plasmid present in *Escherichia coli* DSM 13001 (NN049489), or
   d) an analogue of the polypeptide defined in (a) or (b) which:
      i) is at least 60 % homologous with said polypeptide, or
      ii) is derived from said polypeptide by substitution, deletion and/or insertion of one or more amino acids.

2. An alpha-amylase which has an activity at pH 10.5 which is at least two times higher than the activity at pH 7.3 when measured at 37°C.

3. An alpha-amylase which has an activity at pH 9.5 which is at least 4 times higher than the activity at pH 7.3 when measured at 37°C.

4. The alpha-amylase of claim 1 which is from a strain of *Bacillus*, preferably *Bacillus sp.* NCIMB 40916.

5. The alpha-amylase of claim 1 which retains more than 90 % of its activity after 20 minutes incubation at 25°C in a solution of 3 g/l of a test detergent containing 20% STPP, 25% Na2SO4, 15% Na2CO3, 20% LAS, 5% C12-C15 alcohol ethoxylate, 5% Na2Si2O5, 0.3% NaCl at pH 10.5 and 6 degrees German hardness, and retains less than 90 % of its activity after 20 minutes incubation at 30°C in the same solution.

6. The alpha-amylase of claim 1 which has a molecular weight of about 55 kDa as determined by SDS-PAGE.

7. The alpha-amylase of claim 1 which has an iso-electric point of about 5 as determined by isoelectric focusing.

8. The alpha-amylase of claim 1 in the form of a detergent additive which is a non-dusting granulate or a stabilized liquid.

9. An isolated DNA sequence which encodes the alpha-amylase of claim 1.

10. The DNA sequence according to claim 9, which is from a bacterium, preferably from *Bacillus*, most preferably from the strain NCIMB 40916.

11. A recombinant expression vector comprising the DNA sequence of claim 9.

12. A cell transformed with the DNA sequence of claim 9 or the recombinant expression vector of claim 11.

13. The cell of claim 12, which is a prokaryotic cell, in particular a bacterial cell or an endogenous cell from which said DNA sequence originates.

14. The cell of claim 13, wherein the cell belongs to *Bacillus* or *Escherichia*, preferably *E. coli.*

15. A method of producing an alpha-amylase, comprising cultivating a cell of claim 12 under conditions permitting the production of the alpha-amylase, and recovering the alpha-amylase from the culture.

16. A method for producing the alpha-amylase of claim 1, comprising cultivating an amylase-producing strain of *Bacillus* in a suitable nutrient medium, and recovering the alpha-amylase from the culture medium.

17. A detergent composition comprising the alpha-amylase of claim 1 and a surfactant.

18. The detergent composition of claim 18 which has a pH of 8.5-11 in aqueous solution, preferably pH 9-10.5

19. The detergent composition of claim 18 which is a laundry detergent.